

offer learners a comprehensive and effective approach to improving their speaking skills, leading to greater fluency, confidence, and real-world communicative competence.

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DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH SOLO TAXONOMY: A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract. The Structured Observation of Learning Outcomes (SOLO) Taxonomy provides a systematic framework for evaluating student learning. Initially developed by Biggs and Collis (1982), the SOLO taxonomy categorises learning outcomes based on complexity. This article explores its application in teaching speaking skills in language education, emphasising how its hierarchical structure can scaffold speaking tasks, assess performance, and promote deeper learning.

Introduction. Speaking is a core component of language proficiency and a critical skill in academic and real-world contexts. However, assessing and developing speaking abilities in a structured manner remains challenging for many educators. The SOLO Taxonomy offers a potential solution by providing a clear, progressive model of learning outcomes that can be aligned with speaking tasks. This article investigates how the SOLO Taxonomy can be used effectively in planning, teaching, and assessing speaking skills.

SOLO Taxonomy Overview

The SOLO Taxonomy categorizes learning into five levels:

1. Prestructural: The learner shows little or no understanding.
2. Unistructural: The learner focuses on one aspect of the task.
3. Multistructural: The learner addresses several aspects, but without integration.
4. Relational: The learner links ideas into a coherent whole.
5. Extended Abstract: The learner goes beyond the given information to generalize and transfer learning to new contexts.

These levels can be adapted to suit various skills, including speaking, by matching learning tasks and assessment criteria to each stage.

Applying SOLO Taxonomy to Teaching Speaking Task Design

SOLO can guide the design of speaking tasks that gradually increase in cognitive and communicative complexity:

- Prestructural: Simple vocabulary drills or one-word answers.
- Unistructural: Responding to basic questions with short phrases.
- Multistructural: Giving short talks on familiar topics with several points.
- Relational: Engaging in discussions, presenting arguments with clear structure.
- Extended Abstract: Leading debates, making cross-topic comparisons, or giving persuasive speeches that connect with broader contexts.

Assessment. SOLO provides a framework for formative and summative assessment. Teachers can assess student responses based on the level of complexity, coherence, and depth:

- At lower levels, focus is on accuracy and content.
- At higher levels, fluency, interaction, critical thinking, and synthesis are emphasized.

Feedback and Progression

Using SOLO levels helps teachers provide precise feedback. For instance, a student at the multistructural level may be encouraged to connect their ideas, moving toward the relational level. This scaffolding supports learner autonomy and metacognitive development.

Benefits of SOLO in Speaking Instruction

- Clarity: Clearly defined levels make learning outcomes more transparent for both teachers and students.
- Progress Monitoring: Enables tracking of student progression over time.
- Differentiation: Supports designing tasks tailored to varied proficiency levels.
- Deeper Learning: Encourages learners to move beyond surface understanding toward meaningful communication.

Challenges and Considerations

While SOLO is a powerful tool, applying it to speaking instruction requires training and careful planning. Teachers must ensure that tasks align with each level and that assessments are valid and reliable. Additionally, cultural and individual learner differences should be considered.

Conclusion. The SOLO Taxonomy offers a valuable framework for teaching and assessing speaking skills in a structured, developmental manner. By aligning speaking tasks with SOLO levels, educators can foster deeper understanding, encourage critical thinking, and support learners in achieving communicative competence.

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GAMIFICATION AS AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT. This article explores the role of gamification as a modern pedagogical strategy in English language education. By transforming traditional learning environments into engaging and interactive experiences, gamification enhances learner motivation, autonomy, and communicative competence. The paper discusses key elements of gamified instruction, its psychological foundations, and its integration into the Uzbek educational context. The analysis is supported by international research findings and practical examples.

Keywords: gamification, motivation, English language learning, learner engagement, digital platforms, innovative methods.